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Pupils in South African Bantu schools spend one third of their time in Standards (Grades) 1 and 2 learning the official languages, English and Afrikaans. Nearly as much time is given to the learning of their own Bantu mother tongue, the language of instruction from Sub-Standard A (Preprimary) to Standard 6. In the Lower Primary schools, through Standard 2, the pupil is busy with language learning for over 45% of his time; in the Higher Primary school for 40% of his time. Surveys indicate that English teaching (as a language, and as a medium of instruction), is almost completely by non-mother tongue speakers of English. A 1963 survey showed that 45% of all Bantu teachers have had a primary school education only, followed by a three-year course of professional training. Other figures indicate that the qualifications of teachers in the city tend to be higher than the average for the whole country. The author feels that if a realistic view is taken of the other school subjects, including Afrikaans and the pupil's home language, the standards of English will not be improved by devoting more time to its teaching. A solution can be sought only in the improvement of the quality of the teacher and in the language materials and aids at her disposal. Comments on the improvement in the Johannesburg Bantu schools, as well as statistics on teacher qualifications, test results, and other relevant information appear in appendixes to this paper. (AMM)

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The Teaching of English in Bantu Schools in South Africa

(Some Comments on the Present Situation)

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MR. K. B. HARTSHORNE

AL 001 817

THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH IN BANTU SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

SOME COMMENTS ON THE PRESENT SITUATION.
(With particular reference to the language background and training of the Bantu teacher).

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Of the 30,119 teachers in Bantu schools at the end of 1963 (the latest published figures) only 529 (or 1.7%) were white, and of these only a very small number was English-speaking. Except for 76 white teachers employed in private schools, the 27,755 teachers in Primary schools were all Bantu. It is therefore clear that English, whether taught as a language or used as a medium of instruction, is almost completely in the hands of non-mother tongue speakers of English. (See Appendix 1).

Because of this it is important to establish what training has been given to, and what level of English has been attained by, the Bantu teachers in whose hands lies the future of English in the African community in South Africa. Appendix 1 shows that 13,332 (or 45.1% of all Bantu teachers)have had a primary school education only, followed by a three-year course of professional training. These are mostly women. 10,505 (or 35.5%) have had a three-year secondary education ending with a Junior Certificate qualification, followed by two years of professional training. 4,596 (or 15.5%) have had no professional training, and in many cases have completed little more than a primary school education. Only 783 (or 2.6%) have had an academic background of Matriculation or above; 701 of these are teachers in secondary or teacher-training schools.

A more detailed analysis of the English qualifications of a group of 443 teachers in a city inspection circuit, in all types of schools, (Appendix 2) showed that 81% had Junior Certificate English or lower, while 19% had Senior Certificate or higher. As is to be expected, the qualifications of teachers in the city tend to be higher than the average for the whole country. It should be noted that even in the secondary schools of the circuit only about 50% of the teachers had any university course in English, and this in schools where English is the dominant medium of instruction.

A further survey (1963) of the English qualifications of the teachers responsible for teaching English to the Std. VIII (public examination) classes in the secondary schools of the Southern Transvaal area revealed the following:-

Lower than Matriculation English	.....	3
Matriculation English	.....	6
B.A. English I	.....	12
B.A. English II	.....	11
B.A. English III	.....	11

Again these are more favourable than the figures for the country as a whole.

English is taught as a language throughout the eight-year primary school course, starting generally from the day of the child's admission to school. The time given to English at various stages of the child's education is shown in Appendix 3. If a realistic view is taken of the claims of the other school subjects, including Afrikaans and the pupil's home language, it is clear that improvement in standards of English cannot be sought in attempting to increase the time given to it. Indeed it is very doubtful whether this would achieve the desired effect; a solution can be sought only in the improvement of the quality of the teacher and in the language materials and aids at her disposal.

One out of every ten pupils in the Lower Primary school (first four years of schooling) is taught by a professionally-unqualified teacher, while the great majority of the others are taught by women teachers who themselves had an eight-year primary education before being trained as teachers. These are the years (7 - 12 years old) when the foundations of second language learning are laid, and when, in particular, speech habits are established. It is in these years that the patterns of "African English" are built into pupils in Bantu schools. If more acceptable standards are to be achieved priority will have to be given to improving the quality of the teaching of the second language in these first four years. On the whole it is the teachers in these junior schools who require the greatest assistance. Therefore, any methods, programmes or materials that are drawn up must take a realistic view of the training, background and capacity of the teachers who will be required to make the day-to-day application. It is on this rock that many of the courses and materials prepared for the continent of Africa have foundered.

At the Higher Primary school stage (Stds. 3 - 6, fifth to eighth years of schooling) the pupil is more likely to be taught by a teacher, man or woman, with the Higher Primary Teacher's Certificate, whose academic standard of English will be roughly that of Standard Nine, Lower Grade. Teachers in these schools tend to concentrate on reading, "grammar" and the writing of English, with the pupil attempting 'composition' long before he is ready for this sophisticated form of expression. Speech tends to be neglected, except in Std. 6 where the requirements of a formal oral examination have to be met, and little or no remedial work is done. The patterns of "African English" established in the Lower Primary school are further reinforced.

At the Standard Six level (end of the primary school) there are considerable variations of standard in English throughout the Republic. In the 'stanine' achievement tests standardised for Std. 6 pupils, the poorest rural circuit has a general average rating score for English of 21, while the average for Johannesburg was 35. The comparative range for Afrikaans was 13 to 31.

To qualify for entry to the Secondary school at the end of Std. 6 the Bantu pupil must gain an over-all aggregate of 50%, a 40% pass in his home language and a 40% pass in one of the official languages. When he enters Form 1 in the Secondary school he is required to use English as a medium in most of his subjects, as well as continuing to study it as a language. Of the 285 secondary schools in existence at the end of 1962

123 used English as medium,
79 used English predominantly
while 83 used both Afrikaans and English.

The first secondary year (Form 1) is largely a year of adjustment to the use of the new medium (or media). The teaching of the language itself continues along conventional lines, and little or no attention is given to the particular problems arising from it's use as a medium of instruction.

At the end of the Form 1 year, particularly in the larger schools, the brighter pupils begin the study of English on the "A" (Higher) grade, while the others take English on the "B" (or Lower) grade. See Appendix 4.C. Of the 11,000 pupils writing Junior Certificate at present, about half take English on the "A" grade. Over the past five years an average of about 45% of the pupils writing "A" English have passed, while the average for "B" English has been above 90%. As on the whole the better pupils tend to take "A" English, the difference in results is an indication of the much more difficult standard required in this than in "B" English. Because of this principals are very hesitant to admit to Matriculation classes (Forms 4 and 5) pupils who have not taken English on the "A" grade.

The position of English at the Matriculation level is illustrated in Appendix 5, where an analysis of the 1964 results is given. 47% of those taking Higher English gained a Matriculation pass in the subject, while the comparative figure for Lower English was 87.8%. It should be noted that for those taking Lower English a similar pass in Afrikaans Lower is compulsory for Matriculation requirements. The analysis reveals that Afrikaans Lower is a greater hurdle than even English Higher. Pupils with English Higher can obtain a Matriculation certificate without Afrikaans if they satisfy the requirements in Bantu Language Higher and Mathematics.

At the Teacher Training schools student teachers, who enter with a Junior Certificate qualification, continue their study of English as a language, and are taught mainly through the medium of English. The main components of the course are reading, comprehension, language work and composition. In addition about 80 minutes per week are spent on the methods of teaching English in the primary school, and supervised teaching practice in English is carried out at intervals throughout the course. While most lecturers in English at the training schools are fully aware of the problems of "African English", the remedial work that is being done is of little effect. The student teachers have been exposed to at least eleven years of aberrant, non-standard English before coming to the training schools and only radical methods will be capable of correcting language habits so firmly entrenched. As important as the correction of the student teacher's own English, however, and perhaps more possible of achievement, is to give him some understanding of the language problems of the pupils that he will teach, and to train him in the use of modern audio-lingual aids that will enable him to make use of authentic models of English in the class room, instead of his being entirely dependent upon his own limited resources in setting a standard for his pupils.

This too is the basic need of the teacher in service, and it is this need that the present experiments are designed to attempt to meet, particularly as far as the first four years of school are concerned.

The syllabuses for English, from Sub-standard A up to Standard 8, are at present in the process of revision (as in all schools in South Africa). The new draft syllabuses for the first four years (Sub A to Std. 2) in particular have been very strongly influenced by the experience gained in the experiments carried out under Professor Lanham's supervision. They seek to provide the junior school teacher with a much more detailed and carefully worked out progression of structures and sentence patterns for oral work. Syllabuses alone, however, cannot provide the answer; there would seem to be three further prime requisites for any radical improvement in the situation :

1. A re-assessment of the methods of training Bantu teachers in the teaching of second languages, with the intention of giving specific and detailed attention to actual language materials and courses that the student-teacher could use competently and with confidence on her appointment to a school.

2. The provision of detailed and structured language materials geared specifically to the requirements of the syllabus, and the training of teachers in service in the effective use of these materials.

3. The acceptance of the primacy of speech in early language teaching, and the necessity, therefore, of supporting the teacher with authentic models of standard S.A. English, relevant to the school situation, on tape or disc.

The experience of the past five years in the Johannesburg Bantu schools has shown what can be achieved if the latter two requisites are applied. The teachers have reacted positively and effectively, and have accepted the new approach enthusiastically once they have seen it to be both practical in the classroom situation and of benefit to the language learning of their pupils. A by-product has been the improvement of their own English along with that of their pupils. The co-operation of the teachers has been one of the most encouraging features of the whole project; it has revealed a potential capable of development in the wider educational field, and beyond the bounds of Soweto, Johannesburg.

APPENDIX 1.

BANTU EDUCATION : SOUTH AFRICA : 1963.

TEACHERS' QUALIFICATIONS.

WHITE	AIDED SCHOOLS	PRIVATE SCHOOLS	TOTALS
1. Primary Teachers Cert.	98	76	174
2. Degree and Prof. Qual.	145	17	162
3. Secondary Trs. Diploma	6	2	8
4. Specialist Trs. Qual.	16	12	28
5. Technical Trs. Qual.	29	-	29
6. Degree only (no prof.tng.)	16	34	50
7. Neither degree nor prof. training.	30	48	78
	340	189	529

BANTU.			
1. Lower Primary Trs. Cert.	12,468	864	13,332
2. Higher Prim. Trs. Cert.	10,119	386	10,505
3. Bantu Educ. Diploma (Sec)	235	4	239
4. Degree and prof. quals.	500	5	505
5. Specialist Trs. quals.	311	20	331
6. Technical Trs. quals.	37	6	43
7. Degree only (no prof.tng.)	35	4	39
8. Neither degree nor prof. training.	3,969	627	4,596
TOTALS	27,674	1,916	29,590

APPENDIX 1 (Continued)

NOTES :

1. Lower Primary Teachers Certificate :

   Standard Six (8 years primary education) and three years professional training.

2. Higher Primary Teachers Certificate :

   Junior Certificate (8 years primary education, and three years secondary education) and two years professional training.

3. Bantu Education Diploma :

   Senior Certificate (8 years primary education, and five years secondary education) and two years professional training.

4. 41.3% of the teaching force are men and 58.7% are women.

5. 42% of the teaching force are younger than 30 years.

APPENDIX 2.

TYPICAL CITY CIRCUIT, 1964.

ANALYSIS OF QUALIFICATIONS IN ENGLISH

OF A GROUP OF 443 BANTU TEACHERS.

ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS	LOWER PRIMARY SCHOOLS A-Std. 2	HIGHER PRIMARY SCHOOLS Stds.3-6	SECONDARY SCHOOLS Forms 1-5	TOTALS
Standard Six	113	86	4	203
Junior Certificate	57	94	5	156
Senior Certificate	2	28	20	50
First Year B.A.	-	2	21	23
Second Year B.A.	-	-	7	7
Third Year B.A.	-	-	4	4
TOTALS	172	210	61	443

APPENDIX 3.

TIME GIVEN TO ENGLISH at various stages of education :

	NUMBER OF MINUTES PER WEEK	TOTAL TEACHING TIME PER WEEK	PERCENTAGE
LOWER PRIMARY SCHOOL			
Sub-Standards A and B	125	925	13½%
Standards 1 and 2	270	1,650	16½%
HIGHER PRIMARY SCHOOL.			
Standards 3 to 6	240	1,650	14½%
SECONDARY SCHOOL			
Junior Certificate	270	1,600	17 %
Senior Certificate	280	1,600	17½%
TEACHER TRAINING	200	1,720	11½%

NOTE :

For those not familiar with the South African situation it is necessary to point out that identical attention and time is given to AFRIKAANS, the other official language of the country, so that, for example, pupils in Standards 1 and 2 are giving one-third of their time to the official languages. This is in addition to the learning of their own Bantu mother-tongue to which very nearly as much time is given throughout, in addition to it's use as medium from Standards Sub A to 6. In all, in the Lower Primary school the pupil is busy with language learning for over 45% of his time; in the Higher Primary school for 40% of his time.

APPENDIX 4.

SUMMARY OF
SYLLABUS AND EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS at various levels.

A. LOWER PRIMARY SCHOOL (existing requirements, but in process of revision).

	Minutes per week
First Year : Sub-standard A	
Oral and conversational work only, with some recitation.	125
Second Year : Sub-standard B	
Oral Work	50
Reading	50
Recitation	25
Third Year : Standard 1	
Oral Work	150
Reading	60
Written Work	30
Recitation	30
Fourth Year : Standard 2	
Oral Work	120
Reading	60
Written Work	60
Recitation	30

NOTE : This time distribution is meant as a guide to the teacher and does not imply any arbitrary or artificial divisions in the teaching of English.

APPENDIX 4 (continued)

B. HIGHER PRIMARY SCHOOL (existing requirements, but in process of revision).

	Minutes per week.
Fifth to Eigth Years : Standards 3 to 6.	
Oral Work	60
Reading	60
Language Study	60
Written Work	60

NOTE : This time distribution is meant as a guide to the teacher and does not imply any arbitrary or artificial divisions in the teaching of English.

At the STANDARD SIX level the pupils write an external test in English : the examination paper is constructed as follows:

Composition (of about 25 lines)	:	40 marks
Letter	:	20
Comprehension test	:	20
Language questions	:	20
		100
Oral Test	:	40
TOTAL	:	140 marks

(out of a maximum of 1,000)

In order to gain entry to a secondary school the pupil must gain at least a 50% aggregate in the whole exam, together with a 40% pass in his home language, a 40% pass in one official language and a 33% pass in the other.

C. SECONDARY SCHOOL.

At the secondary school level it is possible for pupils to take English on the A (Higher) grade, or on the B (Lower) grade. Apart from the generally higher standard required of pupils taking the Higher grade, more time is also given to the study of English Literature (prescribed books).

The following summary of examination requirements at the Junior Certificate (Form 3) stage will illustrate the basic differences. These are the new draft proposals to come into operation in 1968.

		A Grade	B Grade
First Paper		3 hours	$1\frac{1}{2}$ hours
Composition		80	60
Letter		20	20
Telegram		10	10
Comprehension		20	-
Language		90	-
	TOTALS	220	90
Second Paper		2 hours	$2\frac{1}{2}$ hours
Comprehension		-	20
Language		-	70
Prescribed books		120	60
	TOTALS	120	150

APPENDIX 4 (continued)

	A Grade	B Grade
Oral Examination		
1. Reading		
(a) Proficiency in Oral Reading	10	10
(b) Comprehension	10	10
2. Recitation	10	10
3. Speech		
(a) Questions on private reading	10	10
(b) Speaking on topic and free conversation	20	20
TOTALS	60	60
GRAND TOTALS	400	300

APPENDIX 5.

THE MATRICULATION EXAMINATION.

In the last two years of the senior secondary school (Forms 4 and 5) pupils still have the choice of A or B grade English, and prepare for the Senior Certificate examinations of the Joint Matriculation Board or the Department of Education, Arts and Science, examinations also taken by white pupils throughout South Africa, and not controlled by the Department of Bantu Education.

1964 RESULTS IN ENGLISH.

GRADE A (Higher).

Symbols	%	JOINT MATRIC.	E.A. and S.	TOTALS
A	80 - 100	-	-	-
B	70 - 79	-	-	-
C	60 - 69	-	-	-
D	50 - 59	29	7	36
E	40 - 49	103	140	243
F	33 - 39	61	109	170
G	25 - 33	56	56	112
H	0 - 24	18	14	32
	TOTALS	267	326	593

NOTE : 279 or 47% gained 40% and over and thereby qualified for the Matriculation requirement.

449 (including the above) or 76% gained 33% and over, the requirement for a Senior Certificate pass.

APPENDIX 5 (Continued)

GRADE B (Lower)

Symbols	%	JOINT MATRIC.	E.A. and S.	TOTALS
A	80 - 100	-	-	-
B	70 - 79	2	2	4
C	60 - 69	39	8	47
D	50 - 59	79	60	139
E	40 - 49	65	93	158
F	33 - 39	26	7	33
G	25 - 33	10	5	15
H	0 - 24	-	-	-
	TOTALS	221	175	396

NOTE : 348 or 87.8% gained 40% and over and thereby qualified for the Matriculation requirement.

381 (including the above) or 96.2% gained 33% and over, the requirement for a Senior Certificate pass.

The comparative figures for AFRIKAANS, GRADE B (Lower), (no candidates took Afrikaans Higher) were as follows :

374 or 39.7% gained 40% and over and thereby qualified for the Matriculation requirement.

568 (including the above) or 58.7% gained 33% and over, the requirement for a Senior Certificate pass.

APPENDIX 5 (continued).

It is clear, therefore, that Afrikaans Lower is an even greater problem for candidates than English Higher.

FURTHER NOTE:

The results in MATHEMATICS are of relevance to Matriculation results in the languages, as a candidate who passes English Higher, but fails Afrikaans Lower, may still gain a Matriculation exemption if he passes Mathematics. It is assumed that he has passed his own Bantu language on the Higher Grade.

Of the 331 candidates who took Mathematics, 128 or 38.7% were successful in gaining 40% or over.

A candidate who takes English Lower, must also pass in Afrikaans Lower.